

Executive Summary of ITK Paper on Accountability

The Prime Minister set out a clear commitment to “renew the relationship between Aboriginal Peoples and the Government of Canada.”

Inuit want to explore accountability principles in a broader context involving financial and non-financial dimensions. Inuit want to better define the Government of Canada’s long-promised renewed relationship with Inuit.

Accountability is only one dimension of a much broader relationship. Accountability among partners is qualitatively different than hierarchical accountability. Inuit see accountability as a way “to build consensus, through broad participation and consultation”. An overarching goal of accountability discussions should be the development of a framework that would be of equal value and benefit to each party.

New Inuit-specific approaches are required given the environmental, geographic and cultural realities of the Arctic regions of Canada. Inuit have submitted to the Prime Minister three fundamental initiatives which could be a foundation for this new relationship: *an Inuit Partnership Accord*, *a new Land Claims Implementation Policy* and *Inuit-Specific Policies and Programs* [see below: Foundations for a New Relationship]

Currently there is no single window for reporting within the Government of Canada structure for Inuit issues. While a commitment has been made to create an Inuit Secretariat, tangible progress towards transformative change in the relationship with Inuit has not yet occurred.

Reporting requirements established by federal government organizations can be a significant burden for the small Inuit communities and organizations.

Complicating the work of Inuit organizations is the fact that currently there are no long-term financial or core funding arrangements with the Government of Canada. Therefore an inordinate amount of time and energy is spent by these organizations chasing resources in order to remain in operation and carry out their responsibilities.

This uncertain financial system seriously restricts community-generated program development that reflects Inuit culture, environment and geography. This system is counter-productive and does not allow Inuit themselves to assess or determine their needs and priorities, nor to provide initiatives in health, environment, socio-economic or research matters.

In moving forward the Inuit call for a process that is:

- Mutually transparent
- Appropriately aligns responsibility and capacity
- Equitable
- Stable
- Results-oriented.